THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD'S REACTION TO THE TALIBAN'S RETURN TO POWER

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November 2021

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Introduction

For the last several months, Islamists around the world have monitored the events in Afghanistan with great interest. The Taliban's successful military offensive and subsequent return to power galvanized public displays of support from the movement's regional allies, and especially from aligned Al-Qaeda supporters. While much attention has been paid to the reactions among various jihadist groups, there has not been much focus on the broader effects of the Taliban takeover on global Islamist movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood.

While a significant degree of uncertainty still surrounds the Taliban's international agenda, prominent players within the Muslim Brotherhood have already signaled their unambiguous support for the group. This paper compiles those declarations of support by Muslim Brotherhood members, documenting various quotes, official statements, publications, media appearances, and more. The collection starts from the fall of Kabul and proceeds to the present, dividing quotes into two distinct categories according to their origin: 1) those made by members or groups of the global Muslim Brotherhood, and 2) those made by members or institutions specifically of the Muslim Brotherhood in the West. On the whole, the collection below provides evidence not only of the ideological affinities shared by the Taliban and the Muslim Brotherhood, but also reveals how the Brotherhood is adapting its discourse to incorporate and accommodate new narratives of the fall of Kabul to the Taliban.

The Global Muslim Brotherhood

Listed below there is a series of quotes and official statements congratulating Afghanistan and the Taliban, if not the *umma*, made by groups and prominent individuals directly or indirectly linked to the Global Muslim Brotherhood. This first section includes a series of excerpts congratulating the Taliban on their victory in Afghanistan and celebrating that victory as part of the broader global Muslim community. These quotes and official statements were made by groups and prominent individuals directly or indirectly linked to the global Muslim Brotherhood, not including its Western branches and supporters.

On August 17, just two days after the fall of Kabul, **the Islamic Action Front (the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan)** congratulated the Taliban. The organization offered "*its deepest congratulations and blessings to the brotherly Afghan people on the defeat of the brutal American occupation and the return all Afghan lands at to the hands of the Mujahideen from the Taliban movement and the entire Afghan people*".[1] The party also stated that the Taliban victory "*confirms that the spirit of jihad and resistance against the occupation is still firmly rooted in the hearts of the sons of the Islamic nation* [...]".[2]

That same day, **Abderrazak Makri, president of the Movement of Society for Peace (the Algerian Muslim Brotherhood-inspired political party)**, acting in his capacity as Secretary General of the Kuala Lumpur Forum for Thought and Civilization, sent "*his warmest congratulations to all the different components of the Afghan people and to all the mujahideen, militants and reformers, led by the mujahideen Taliban movement*".[3] A few days later, Makri posted on his personal website that the Taliban are "*an Afghan movement that has to be identified and judged according to its environment and the conditions of its origins*", adding that "*there is no reason to consider it a terrorist movement. The Taliban bears arms due to the occupation, which is what gives legitimacy to the use of arms in any given country: let's not forget that France used to call the Algerian Mujahideen terrorists*".[4]

Also on August 17, **Ali Sallabi, a key figure in the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood,** declared that "*the Taliban has brought about some intellectual and behavioral transformations in its structure*".[5] Sallabi further added that "*these*

1. Official Statement posted by the Islamic Action Front in its official Facebook page, August 17, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/1489772314644511/posts/3025855124369548/ (Accessed: October 13, 2021).
2. Ibid.
3. "Congratulations to the Afghan people on the occasion of the end of foreign occupation and the restauration of sovereignty. [تهنئة الشعب الأفغاني بمناسبة إنهاء الاحتلال الأجنبي واسترجاع السيادة]", Kuala Lumpur Forum for Thought and Civilization, August 16, 2021. Retrieved from: https://kl-forum.org/ar/kl3040 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
4. Makri, A. (2021), "Signs of the end of the occupation in Afghanistan (1). [دلالات نهاية الاحتلال في أفغانستان 1F)]", Dr. Abderrazak Makri official website. Retrieved from: https://makri.net/?p=1451 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
5. Transcript of Ali Sallabi's take on the Taliban in Al Jazeera Mobasher, through Ali Sallabi's official Facebook page, August 17, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/Dr.sallabi/posts/401703404647945 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).

developments and transformations may not be sufficient in the eyes of some, and many will fear the repetition of the previous experience, which is very natural, but we have to be patient and we should not rush to judge the experience before it begins, especially with signs of change, transformation and development, even if slight".[6] In the same interview, Mr. Sallabi also analyzed the evolution of the Taliban relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood, stating that "*in 2001 the Taliban was dealing with the Muslim Brotherhood as an enemy* [...] *that was more dangerous to Islam than the communists* [...] *while their stance has changed significantly in recent years, opening a wide door for closer relations with the Afghan Association for Reform* (the front of the Muslim Brotherhood in Afghanistan)*, visiting Dr. Youssef al Qaradawi, described as 'the godfather of the Muslim Brotherhood' by the Taliban spokesman, or visiting Ismail Haniyeh, head of Hamas political bureau, all of which shows the new positive positioning of the Taliban towards the Muslim Brotherhood*".[7]

Three days later, on August 20, **Sudan's Popular Congress Party, founded by Hassan al Turabi,** also published a statement "*congratulating the Islamic nation, the Afghan people, the Taliban Movement and all the free people of the world on the victory of the Taliban Movement and the realization of the aspirations of the Afghan people to gain freedom and defeat the usurping authority in Afghanistan backed by the U.S. and Western colonial powers*".[8]

That same day, **the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood** congratulated the Taliban and global Muslim community because, according to their statement, "*after more than half a century of Soviet turmoil and occupation, then American, Afghanistan has been blessed with freedom and independence, thanked be God Almighty, then thanks to the patience of its people and the jihad of its mujahideen*".[9]

One day after the fall of Kabul, **the head of the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS), Ahmed Raissouni,** wrote that "*the International Union of Muslim Scholars is optimistic and satisfied with the recent changes that have taken place in the last days and weeks in Afghanistan* [...] *and congratulates the Afghan people and its leadership, especially the Taliban, on these steps and this new stage that has just begun, or is taking shape in Afghanistan*".[10] As president of IUMS, Raissouni defined the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, and especially American forces, as "*an Afghan achievement thanks to jihad, patience and sacrifices… We saw the Taliban did not execute anyone and did not shed blood, it entered the cities to preserve security and private property. We saw a general amnesty, and we saw the initiative of opening prisons they took when entering*

6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Original post deleted, some excerpts can be found at "Sudanese Islamists welcome Taliban takeover in Afghanistan", Sudan Tribune, August 18, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article69959 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
9. Syrian Branch of the Muslim Brotherhood's Twitter account, August 20, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/IkhwanSyriaAR/status/1428713143987450 98 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
10. Raissouni, A. (2021), "Message 'To the Afghan People and Their Leaders'. [رسالة "إلى الشعب الأفغاني وقادته"]", International Union for Muslim Scholars official website, August 16, 2021. Retrieved from: https://iumsonline.org/ar/ContentDetails.aspx?ID=20917 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).

cities to open prisons and release the oppressed from these cemeteries for the living. This heralds the beginning of a new era and the beginning of a new stage".[11] A few days later, in a letter addressed directly to the Islamic Emirate, IUMS "*expressed its sincere congratulations on the trust that Sheikh Akhund has received from the movement and other Afghan parties in assigning him to head the new government*",[12] and offered IUMS's support by further "*affirming its keenness to cooperate fully and to provide everything that can be presented to the new government*".[13] In response, Mullah Muhammad Hassan Akhund expressed his appreciation to the IUMS, stating "*We read with full consideration the contents of the letter of sincere advice, important warnings and the readiness of the union To cooperate with the Islamic Emirate*".[14]

ISLAMIC EMIRATE OF AFGHANISTAN
POLITICAL OFFICE

د افغانستان اسلامي امارت
د مشرتابه سياسي دفتر

REF:3 DATE 13/9/2021

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والعاقبة للمتقين والصلاة والسلام على خير خلقه محمد واله وصحبه أجمعين وبعد.

أصحاب الفضيلة، المشايخ الفضلاء: أ. د. علي محي الدين القرة داغي، أ.د. عبد السلام البسيوني حفظهم الله، وكل المشايخ في رئاسة الاتحاد العالمي لعلماء المسلمين، وأمانته العامة، ومجلس أمنائه، وكافة أعضائه الموقرين السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

نسأل الله تبارك وتعالى أن تكونوا على خير حال في دينكم، وأهلكم، ودنياكم.

لقد تلقينا ببالغ السعادة والفرح رسالة تهنئتكم لنا بما وُلينا من مسوولية رئاسة الوزراء في الإمارة الإسلامية بأفغانستان - نسأل الله تعالى أن يعيننا عليها، وقرأنا بتمعن تام، وتان كامل ما تضمنته من نصائح صادقة، و تنبيهات هامة، واستعداد من الاتحاد للتعاون مع الإمارة الإسلامية.

ونحن إذ نعبر لكم عن جزيل شكرنا، وكامل امتناننا على هذه الرسالة، وما تضمنته، فإننا نعدكم بأننا لن ندخر وسعا، ولن نال جهدا في العمل على تحقيق أمل الشعب الأفغاني المسلم، والأمة الإسلامية كلها في إقامة الحكم الإسلامي الذي يقيم الدين، ويحكم الشريعة، ويحقق العدل، ويرفع الظلم ، ويوحد البلاد، ويرحم العباد، ويحقق الأخوة الإسلامية بين مختلف مكونات الشعب الأفغاني المسلم.

والإمارة الإسلامية في كل ذلك تعول بعد الله تعالى على مناصرة، وموازرة الأمة الإسلامية ، وفي مقدمتها علماؤها، فالعلماء هم ورثة الأنبياء، وحراس الدين، وعماد الشريعة.

في الختام تقبلوا فائق التقدير، وجزيل الشكر، باسمنا، واسم الإمارة الإسلامية، والشعب الأفغاني المسلم.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

أخوكم / الملا محمد حسن أخوند
رئيس وزراء امارت اسلامي افغانستان

Mullah Muhammad Hassan Akhund's letter to the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS).

Shortly thereafter, IUMS received a delegation from the newly-formed government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. During the meeting, Raissouni affirmed that "*any proposal from the government or the [Taliban] movement will be met by IUMS by preparing seminars and conferences to benefit from the experiences and expertise of others in education, politics and economics*".[15] **Ali Qaradaghi, IUMS Secretary General, member of the European Council for Fatwa and Research (the theological/ jurisprudential arm of the Brotherhood in Europe)**, and **Qaradawi's right hand man for the last few decades,** also participated in the meeting. He told the Taliban delegation that "*everyone is very happy with the victories of the Taliban, which are victories of all Muslims, and they have brought joy to the hearts of Muslims, especially those were wounded…*".[16]

11. Ibid.
12. "IUMS congratulates Mullah Muhammad Hassan Akhund on his appointment as Prime Minister. [الاتحاد يهنئ الملا محمد حسن آخوند بمناسبة تعيينه رئيساً للوزراء]", International Union for Muslim Scholars official website, International Union for Muslim Scholars official website, September 12, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.iumsonline.org/ar/ContentDetails.aspx?ID=21040 (Accessed: October 15, 2021).
13. Ibid.
14. Mullah Muhammad Hassan Akhund's letter to IUMS, September 13, 2021. Retrieved from: https://pic.iumsonline.org/uploads/files/ISLAMIC.pdf (Accessed: October 15, 2021).
15. "IUMS receives a delegation from the Government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. [الاتحاد يستقبل وفدا من حكومة الإمارة الإسلامية بأفغانستان]", International Union for Muslim Scholars official website, September 27, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.iumsonline.org/ar/ContentDetails.aspx?ID=21072 (Accessed: August 15, 2021).
16. Ibid.

IUMS receives a delegation from the Government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Doha, Qatar, November 22, 2021).

Both official Hamas statements as well as prominent members acting in their own personal capacity were also among the first Islamist elements to address the Taliban victory. The very same day that Kabul fell, M**ousa Abu Marzook, Deputy Chairman of Hamas Political Bureau,** declared "*The Taliban are victorious today after being accused of backwardness & terrorism. Now it is a more intelligent and realistic movement, a movement that confronted America and its collaborators without being fooled by slogans like democracy and elections and refusing to compromise. This is a lesson for all oppressed peoples, anyone listening?*"[17]

A few days later, as part of an official Hamas delegation visiting Moscow, Abu Marzook added: "*the Taliban is an Afghani movement advocating national independence that has liberated the country from occupation. So, what is wrong with congratulating and supporting them?*" [...] "*Other countries should interact with the Afghans the way Afghans want to be dealt with, not the way Europeans, Americans, or NATO want* [...] *And they shouldn't intervene in Afghani internal affairs*". Later in the interview, he also detailed that they (Hamas) "*have met Taliban leaders several times in Doha, especially after their dialogue with the Americans*".[18]

On August 16, **Ismail Haniyeh, Head of Hamas's political bureau,** also congratulated the Taliban "*on the defeat of the American occupation from all Afghan*

17. Dr. Mousa Abu Marzook's Twitter profile, August 15, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/mosa_abumarzook/status/1426948149617307656 (Accessed: October 13, 2021).
18. Interview with Mousa Abu Marzook, Newsmaker [نيوزميكر], Russia Today Arabic, August 27, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IeLoc7Z8xE&t=47s (Accessed: October 13, 2021).

lands.[19] In a telephone call with Abdul-Ghani Baradar, he described "*their victory against US occupation*" as "*a prelude to the demise of all occupation forces, foremost of which is the Israeli occupation of Palestine*".[20]

That same day, together with a short video showing desperate Afghans attempting to board an outbound U.S. plane and escape the country, **Sami Abu Zuhri, Hamas spokesman,** tweeted that "*The agents of the American occupation in Afghanistan are trying to escape hanging themselves to the tires of the plane. This is the fate of betrayal, which repeats itself in in different times and places. The traitors should take good note of the Afghan lesson*".[21]

Mahmoud al Zahhar, one of Hamas' founders and former Foreign Minister of the Palestinian Authority in the first Haniyeh Government, elaborated that: "*What happened in Afghanistan has many implications in the region. First of all, Afghanistan expelled America from its territory, therefore legitimizing the expulsion of the occupation. This means that what Hamas is doing here to expel the occupation is legitimate. If the world accepted it (in Afghanistan), why wouldn't it be accepted in Gaza? A liberation endeavor is different from a terrorist endeavor*".[22]

19. "Hamas congratulates Afghanistan on the defeat of the American occupation", Hamas Movement, August 16, 2021. Retrieved from: https://hamas.ps/en/post/3563/Hamas-congratulates-Afghanistan-on-the-defeat-of-the-American-occupation (Accessed: October 13, 2021).
20. "Haniyeh calls a Taliban leader to congratulate them on the end of the 'occupation' in Afghanistan. [هنية يهاتف قيادي في "طالبان" مهنئًا بزوال "الاحتلال" عن أفغانستان]", Anadolou Agency, August 16, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.aa.com.tr/ar/%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%af%d9%88%d9%84-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%b1%d8%a8%d9%8a%d8%a9/%d9%87%d9%86%d9%8a%d8%a9-%d9%8a%d9%87%d8%a7%d8%aa%d9%81-%d9%82%d9%8a%d8%a7%d8%af%d9%8a-%d9%81%d9%8a-%d8%b7%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a8%d8%a7%d9%86-%d9%85%d9%87%d9%86%d8%a6%d9%8b%d8%a7-%d8%a8%d8%b2%d9%88%d8%a7%d9%84-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a7%d8%ad%d8%aa%d9%84%d8%a7%d9%84-%d8%b9%d9%86-%d8%a3%d9%81%d8%ba%d8%a7%d9%86%d8%b3%d8%aa%d8%a7%d9%86/2337347 (Accessed: October 13, 2021).
21. Dr. Sami Abu Zuhri's Twitter account, August 16, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/SamiZuhri/status/1427226755006451712 (Accessed: October 13, 2021).
22. Interview with Mahmoud al Zahar in Al-Aqsa TV, August 19, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jIWvQEp2-M&ab_channel=islambader (Accessed: October 13, 2021).

Brotherhood-linked organizations and individuals in the West

Prominent individuals with close ties to the Muslim Brotherhood in the West were also quick to post their personal opinions. Many praised the Taliban's victory and voiced their support for the movement. Others used the takeover as a chance to criticize U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and the broader War on Terror. Still others voiced their opinions on Taliban governance as it relates to women's issues, and a few peddled various conspiracy theories.

On August 15, **Azzam Tamimi, a well-known figure of the British Brotherhood milieu,** was quick to project his wishes for the future, saying "*Today Kabul, soon Jerusalem, God willing*".[23]

During the broadcast of Hiwar London, a TV program aired on the London Based AlHiwar TV, Azzam Tamimi stated that "*Taliban have inspired other Arab peoples to free themselves from tyrants, corrupt or Western-NATO occupation*",[24] further adding that "*Taliban's victory in Afghanistan is not a victory only for Islamists, but for Islam itself*".[25]

During the chaos of the Kabul airport evacuation efforts, **Khallad Swaid, one of the leaders of the German Brotherhood milieu,** described ex-Afghan President's exit from Afghanistan in the following terms: "*Ashraf Ghani and some of his generals did flee to the UAE. Corrupt people stay close to each other…*".[26]

For his part, **Ali Qaradaghi Secretary General of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, member of the European Council for Fatwa and Research and Qaradawi's right hand during the last decades,** "*congratulated the great Afghan people on their victories over the occupiers*",[27] further stressing that "*We are very happy with the attitudes of the Taliban movement in its dealings with its people and its political flexibility*".[28] Qaradaghi "*also thanked the people, the Emir and the government of the State of Qatar for its great efforts in facilitating the negotiating atmosphere that resulted in the US and the rest of the occupiers' withdrawal agreement*".[29] Barely a month later, Qaradaghi urged recognition of the Taliban government: "*I call on the United Nations and the countries of the world, especially*

23. Azzam Tamimi's Facebook profile, August 15, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/astamimi/posts/4476937235661811 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
24. "Why do regional and international powers attack political Islam and seek to criminalize it? [لماذا تهاجم القوى الإقليمية والدولية الإسلام السياسي وتسعى إلى تجريمه؟]", Hiwar London, Alhiwar TV, broadcasted August 18, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rWUnJ5y324 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
25. Ibid.
26. Khallad Swaid's Twitter account, August 18, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/theKhalude/status/1428025769364795393 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
27. Dr. Ali Qaradaghi's Twitter account, August 17, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Ali_AlQaradaghi/status/1427589970039132170?s=08 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.

Islamic countries, to recognize the 'Taliban' government, and to help it achieve security, stability and development in the country, as well as to release the frozen Afghan assets to help the Afghan people".[30]

Foued Alaoui, Director of Europe Trust (the European Brotherhood's financial arm) and former Secretary General of the Union of Islamic Organizations of France (UOIF, now Musulmans de France), shared a video[31] originally posted by the Islamic Center of Geneva in which Hani Ramadan advocates a certain approach for engagement with the Taliban: "*Everybody says: oh, it is terrible that the Taliban are in power, but we don't listen to them. We only listen to them through journalists and people specializing in communication that are guided by a monolithic thinking that nourishes islamophobia and discredits everything arising from Islamic values* [...] *We must stand against all forms of barbarism, and for once I am not sure that barbarism will manifest itself within the Taliban as much as it will manifest itself in the camp of those who allow themselves to bomb civilians indiscriminately* [...]. *Let's ponder on the issue, let's be intelligent enough to enter into a logic of dialogue* (with the Taliban) *and let's not get caught up in the wheels of confrontation*".[32]

Khaled Hanafy, professor at the European Institute of Human Sciences (IESH) and prominent member of the German Brotherhood milieu, expressed his joy as events were unfolding: "*We must not miss the opportunity to rejoice and be optimistic about what the Taliban have accomplished in Afghanistan.* [...] *However, reformist movements with an Islamic orientation lack of political experience and the world will not easily accept them in power*".[33]

Basil Marei, current Secretary General of the former Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE, now Council of European Muslims – CEM) and a leading figure of the Ukrainian Brotherhood milieu, also criticized the US intervention in Afghanistan, saying: "*Where did the pretext of September 11 go... It killed millions... Terrorism, the dirtiest American industry known to history, was a path to the destruction of both Iraq and Afghanistan*".[34] Basil Marei also stated that "*reducing the Afghan scenario to a simple conspiracy is an oversimplification of the issue. Before the Afghan government's surrender there was occupation, mountains, men, steadfastness, heroism, and prisons...*".[35]

30. Dr. Ali Qaradaghi's Twitter account, September 20, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Ali_AlQaradaghi/status/1439993679075237893 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
31. Fouad Alaoui's Facebook profile, August 22, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/fouad.alaoui.21233/posts/1888111728017207 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
32. "Paroles du Vendredi: 'Les talibans et nous'", Hani Ramadan official YouTube channel, August 19, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiqAn8D46uI (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
33. Khaled Hanafy's Facebook profile, August 18, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/dr.hanafy/posts/4361638287228957 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
34. Basil Marei's Facebook profile, August 17, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/mmbassil/posts/4317342275012613 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
35. Basil Marei's Facebook profile, August 15, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/mmbassil/posts/4313006488779525 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).

A few days later, without specifying exactly what he was referring to, Marei declared "*Freedom is taken, not given*".[36]

Anas al Tikriti, another key leader of the UK Brotherhood milieu, strongly criticized British and American policies in Afghanistan: "*The US and UK have no moral standing when it comes to Afghanistan as they failed on every level and at every turn, from beginning to the bitter end. They controlled the country for 20 years yet managed only to spread death, violence, corruption and drugs*".[37]

Tariq Ramadan, an influential Islamist scholar and grandson of Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna, also condemned US foreign policy, affirming that "*the USA instrumentalized Sept-11 to invade Afghanistan, although the decision to enter the country had been taken well before*".[38] Regarding the Taliban, the influential scholar stated that "*People and movements evolve, we will see how the Taliban have changed*".

S**alim Benamara, President of the Catalan Islamic Cultural Centre in Barcelona and an emerging figure of the Spanish Brotherhood milieu,** used the Kabul airport attack to frame the Islamic State as a puppet of the U.S.: "*What the explosion in Kabul tells us: Daesh is an American puppet that moves at the required time and place to target collaborators whose evacuation has become a heavy burden! And a reminder for the Taliban... Daesh and the Marines are two sides of the same coin*".[39]

Azzam Tamimi made similar accusations on his personal Facebook page: "*Rogue deviant organizations such as #ISIS provide the most convenient milieu for infiltration & utilization by anti-Muslim agencies intent on undermining genuine Islamic projects and tarnishing the image of Islam and Muslims around the world* [...]".[40]

The international debate on the rights of women under the Taliban has also aroused significant interest among Brotherhood circles. **Ali Abu Shwaima, a leading figure of the Italian Brotherhood milieu and former member of FIOE's/CEM board as well as and founding member of IESH,** stated: "*I don't know whether to laugh or cry when I see the French President concerned about the freedom of Afghan women after the victory of the Taliban while women in France see their rights suppressed with unjust laws being enacted against them to*

36. Basil Marei's Facebook profile, September 6, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/mmbassil/posts/4379529105460596 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
37. Anas al Tikriti's Twitter account, August 20, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/anasaltikriti/status/1428793009588654090 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
38.Tariq Ramadan official Twitter account, August 29, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/TariqRamadan/status/1432028491432615937 (Accessed: October 14, 2021).
39. Salim Benamara's Facebook profile, August 26, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/altortosi.abhoudaifa/posts/10225634040460494 (Accessed: October 15, 2021).
40. Azzam Tamimi's Facebook profile, August 27, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/astamimi/posts/4513735268648674 (Accessed: October 15, 2021).

the point that if they wear their headscarves they'll be prevented from exercising their right to education. Damn you and your lies for trafficking with your people's honor".[41]

Similarly, **Khaled Hanafy** decried what he claims to be Western double standards, saying: "*this world, which is committed to liberalism and the emancipation of women, is at the same time wants to be impose a role model in the liberalization and empowerment of women in the first place. But the political and legal spectrum must not be measured with double standards! What is the difference between forcing the headscarf on the woman and forcing her to take it off to blackmail her?* [...] *Some of those who reject the actions –or expected actions– of the Taliban, especially with regard to dealing with women, behave no better in their own reality! If they were honest with themselves, they would reconsider their own actions before criticizing others on the same matter*".[42]

Ali Qaradaghi also expressed his opinion on the matter: "*They fear for the fate of women under the rule of the Taliban. Boring hypocrisy and cheap trading in the issue of women!*".[43] Dr. Qaradaghi was also critical of the narrative adopted by France: "*France, the country of the alleged freedoms that prevents Muslim women from wearing the hijab at work, school and university, has its Minister of Foreign Affairs looking at us worried about women's rights in Afghanistan under the rule of the Taliban! He should be concerned about the liberties stolen in his country. Boring hypocrisy and bargaining in the issue of women!*".[44]

41. Ali Abu Shwaima's Facebook profile, August 17, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/ali.abushwaima/posts/10215730611936811 (Accessed: October 15, 2021).
42. Khaled Hanafy's Facebook profile, August 20, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.facebook.com/dr.hanafy/posts/4367705519955567 (Accessed: October 15, 2021).
43. Dr. Ali Qaradaghi's Twitter account, August 19, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Ali_AlQaradaghi/status/1428366993195868162 (Accessed: October 15, 2021).
44. Dr. Ali Qaradaghi's Twitter account, August 20, 2021. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Ali_AlQaradaghi/status/1428668028036816897 (Accessed: October 15, 2021).